

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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AMEMBASSY BONN
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USNMR SHAPE BEL
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 0106

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD; USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD; ROME FOR LEGATT
BIAMONTE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORS, CY
SUBJECT: GREEK CYPRIOT POLICE PROMOTIONS

1. SINCE JANUARY 4 GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNIT HAS BEEN SEIZED WITH
CONTROVERSY OVER PROMOTION LIST OF SENIOR POLICE OFFICERS. LIST
AS LEAKED JAN 4 IN SEMI-OFFICIAL PHILELEFTHEROS, PRIOR TO OFFICIAL
ANNOUNCEMENT, WAS CRITICIZED SAME DAY IN PRO-LYSSARIDES TA NEA WHICH
ALLEGED THAT IT CONTAINED "WELL-KNOWN AND ACTIVE COUPISTS." TA NEA
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OPPOSED PROMOTION OF ANYONE WHO WAS IN POLICE COMMAND DURING
SAMPSON'S EIGHT-DAY REGIME.

2. PHILELEFTHEROS AND COMMUNIST HARAVGHI JOINED IN
ATTACK ON PROMOTION LIST FOLLOWING DAY. ISSUE FOCUSED JAN 7 ON
PERSON OF POLICE CHIEF ANTONIOU WHOSE HANDLING OF PROMOTIONS
WAS DESCRIBED AS "UNACCEPTABLE." HARAVGHI WONDERED WHO WAS

REALLY RESPONSIBLE: CHIEF OF POLICE OR MINISTER OF INTERIOR VENIAMIN. LEFTIST PRESS JAN 8 REPORTED GOC HAD DECIDED TO CANCEL ENTIRE LIST AND PROCEED WITH PROMOTION OF "LAWFUL" OFFICERS, AND PHILELEFTHEROS EDITORIALY CALLED FOR ANTONIOU'S IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION. FOLLOWING DAY, GOC ISSUED A LUKEWARM, BELATED ANNOUNCEMENT THAT "CHIEF OF POLICE ENJOYS ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS' CONFIDENCE."

3. CENTER AND RIGHTIST PRESS RATHER WEAKLY AND LATE-IN-THE-DAY SOUGHT TO DEFEND ANTONIOU AND HIS PROMOTION LIST.

4. A REVISED PROMOTION LIST WAS FINALLY RELEASED JANUARY 11. OF 31 NAMES APPEARING ON EARLIER LIST, 26 WERE RETAINED. OF 5 OFFICERS DROPPED, 4 ARE UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE HAD LINKS WITH COUP; TWO OF THE 5 ARE RELATIVES OF CHIEF ANTONIOU.

5. BY OUR READING, ANTONIOU HAS BEEN MADE THE FALL GUY IN ARCHBISHOP'S PIECEMEAL BUT RELENTLESS DRIVE TO ELIMINATE FROM POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE INDIVIDUALS WHO COLLABORATED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING 1974 COUP. THIS BIT OF INTRIGUE PROBABLY SPELLS THE END OF ANTONIOU'S EFFECTIVE CAREER. AT THE SAME TIME, IT ACCOMMODATES LEFT-WING PRESSURES FOR PURGE WHICH ARE MOTIVATED AS MUCH BY A DESIRE TO PLACE ITS OWN MEN AS BY CRUSADING ZEAL AGAINST THE PRESIDENT'S FOES.

6. MAKARIOS' PRINCIPAL TARGET, HOWEVER, MAY BE INTERIOR MINISTER VENIAMIN, WHOSE INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY IN RUNNING THE POLICE HAVE INTENSELY IRRITATED THE ARCHBISHOP FOR THE PAST YEAR AT LEAST. IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW VENIAMIN CAN STAY CONFIDENTIAL

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AFTER HIS DECISION ON PROMOTION OF HIS SUBORDINATES HAS BEEN PUBLICLY REVERSED. PRESS REPORTS JAN 12 SAY HE WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO LONDON AS HIGH COMMISSIONER WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS. WE KNOW THIS IS A POSITION HE HAS ALWAYS HAD IN MIND AGAINST THE DAY WHEN HIS STUBBORN RESISTANCE TO INTERFERENCE IN MATTERS WITHIN HIS JURISDICTION MIGHT BRING ABOUT HIS DISMISSAL. CRAWFORD

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